

THE CHRONICLE

R. W. THOMAS, Editor.

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CLARKSVILLE, : : DEC. 13, 1873.

THE MESSAGE.

As some of our Tennessee exchanges laud the President's Message as an able state paper, of course it is to be inferred that they indorse its recommendations, which are the true tests of its statesmanship and ability. Do they approve the proposition to build some seventy-five splendid mansions for the Senators and members of the Cabinet—to be followed, perhaps, by three hundred more, for the members of the Lower House? Such a tax upon an oppressed people, would cause Grant no concern, who is anxious that the surroundings of his future palace shall emulate the splendors of an Empire, and it is fair to infer that those who admire his wisdom approve his recommendations. Do they endorse his survey of the Amazon river and its tributaries whilst our own rivers are obstructed by shoals and bars, drift-wood and snags? What do they think with a National University for the propagation of Radical, puritan ideas, with secure places for national pets—a huge and costly enterprise for the promotion of centralization, and the depression of State institutions and individual enterprises? Do they endorse his interference with slavery in Cuba and his disregard of that inter-national comity which requires each government to mind its own business and meddle not with that of others? Do they want a Post-office bank, to be run by a member of the Cabinet, as an agency for governmental speculation and speculation? The government has already too many banks for centralizing capital, controlling international commerce and multiplying their wealth by elevating and depressing values and revelling in panics. Do they so thoroughly comprehend the question of finance as to swear by his opinions in the face of the conceded fact that his miserable management of the finances was the cause of the crash that has brought so much loss and suffering upon the people? Do they back him in his effort further to tamper with the Constitution, so as to modify the veto power. Every change made, in that instrument by the Radicals has been in the interest of centralized power and adverse to popular rights, yet the recommendation to make other changes, by the same administration, is accepted as evidence of elevated statesmanship. But we have no inclination to run through the entire document in which we find no proof of wisdom, and no evidence of a return to those safe precedents, a corrupt departure from which has resulted in nothing better than in material, political and moral disaster. Statesmanship consists in elevating government from what it is, to what it should be—democracy, in changing it from good to bad, and from bad to good. This is the standard by which we measure Grant.

THE JUDICIAL COMPAR.

The approaching meeting of the Attorneys General to devise means for the cheaper and more expeditious administration of criminal justice will, we hope, be productive of good. The motive is praiseworthy, but we cannot but feel that the process by which the end is to be reached, without a more thorough overhauling than is within the discretion of that assembly. Could the various counties in the State, be required to substitute workhouses for jails, the ends of justice, in all cases of petty offenses, could be reached more promptly and economically than by the present mode of dealing with them. Instead of taxing the counties with their board and clothing in the Penitentiary, offenders could be employed, in building and repairing roads and bridges, and in doing many other things conducive to the public good; and should a convict occasionally escape, he would be a blessing to return and his absence be a affliction. If legislation be needed to make the system more effective, by increasing the jurisdiction of magistrates and removing the causes of delay which now multiply costs and increase the chances of impunity, let the Legislature be petitioned to make the needed changes in the laws and their administration.

But even this will not suffice to inaugurate the desired reform. The laws are good enough, but the trouble lies in the rules of practice—so complex in their character, so mystified by technicalities and ingenious quibbles that they tend more to screen the guilty from punishment, than to promote the administration of justice. This is an evil that has engendered itself upon the courts, and has been tolerated so long, by public opinion, that its remedy, will be difficult, if not impossible to find. If there be a remedy it is in the hands of the people themselves. If none of them will violate the laws, criminal prosecutions will cease and the State and country will save the immense sums expended for the punishment of offenders—all of which come out of the pockets of the honest and law-abiding citizens. All are interested in promoting virtue and intelligence, as the only safeguards against crime—we dare not hope for its total suppression, but it may be abated, if every good citizen will exert his influence for the advancement of such moral and mental training as will build up a public sentiment sufficiently conservative to repress law-breakers, by making their punishment prompt and certain. Crime is promoted by the many chances offered by the Courts for escaping punishment. Few men commit crime without a hope of escaping its consequences, and, unluckily for the cause of public virtue, too many chances are held out by those to whom the administration of justice is confided. Were punishment certain, crime would be rare; but as it abounds, it is an object to punish it at the least public cost to the innocent.

The Secretary of War asks for a special appropriation of five millions, of dollars, for the navy. We think time will prove that the war cry was the key note to a series of fat jobs.

The House has passed a bill for universal amnesty. Thankful for small favors, gentlemen, and larger ones in proportion.

We are not of those who can conscientiously laud Maynard, for introducing the amnesty bill, at this day. He has had the same opportunity for years past, yet no scallawag showed more vindictiveness against the South. With the lapse of time, comes the perception that Radicalism must take a new departure, and from motives of pure selfishness, he tries to curry favor with the people he has so long oppressed and insulted.

A CALL is made for a meeting, in Nashville, on the 11th and 12th of this month, of the County Superintendents of Common Schools. Let us hope that it will be universally responded to. We are satisfied that a vigorous and continuous effort is needed to place the system upon a safe basis, by creating a public opinion in its favor abroad, and strong enough to vitalize and uphold it against all opposition. Every year's experience teaches the necessity for a more general and thorough education—moral and intellectual—as the only agency through which free institutions can be preserved and every species of vice and crime be abated. Like every thing new, our school system meets with opposition—ignorant and prejudiced—the officers to whom its first experiment and its success are confided have a very high duty to perform and heavy responsibility to bear—all demanding vigilance, prudence and energy. Let them meet and counsel together—impart and imbibe zeal and resolve to do their whole duty.

JOHN C. UNDERWOOD, United States District Judge for the District of Virginia, died suddenly of apoplexy, at his residence in Washington, on the 11th inst.

GEN. WHITTAKER has introduced a bill in Congress to repeal all taxes on whisky and tobacco, and to provide for the deficiency in the revenue thereby occasioned.

THE recent Democratic victories had rather a frosty effect upon the Clarksville Tobacco Leaf. It might have been it was a little too green for the season.—*Brownsville States.*

Let our neighbor rise and explain.

It is stated that Columbia, Tenn., ships annually six thousand bales of cotton.

WE are compelled to leave out the market report this week—no change in the price of groceries since our last.

Capt. Woodbridge's Lecture.

It is seldom that we have enjoyed a treat so purely intellectual, as the lecture given Tuesday night of last week, at the C. P. Church, by Capt. Woodbridge, late of the C. S. A.

It is well known that the Captain was frightfully wounded in the temples at the battle of Perryville, in such a way as totally to deprive him of vision, and the subject of his lecture was touchingly applicable to his circumstances, being a treatise on Light and color given in a manner at once scientific and popular.

We do not propose to give an abstract of the lecture; those who heard it will not need it, and those who did not ought to have done so, and will doubtless, do so on a future occasion. Suffice it to say, that his subject was ably and judiciously elucidated according to the latest achievements of optical research, and at the same time in language so lucid, and ornamented with fancy, so graceful that attention never flagged for a moment. But the interest became painfully intense when abandoning the expositions of abstract science, he arrived at the narration of the terrible struggle, when in an agonizing moment light became a memory and ceased forever to be a matter of experience; when the sense of vision was first shocked and blasted with the red glare of blood and fire, and then remorselessly crushed forever by the rending missile. Milton and his lamentations over a kindred loss were irresistibly brought to mind and we almost anticipated the quotation:

"Dark, dark amid the blank of noon,
Unreproach'd dark, total eclipse,
Without all hope of day,
Why am I that I see this prime decree,
The sun to me is dark,
And silent as the moon,
When she is hid by night,
Had I but seen her in her own infernal cave,<
To live a life half dead, a living death,
And buried, but, O yet more miserable,
Myself my sepulchre, a moving grave."
J.

Call Meeting of Directors.

At a regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the county, on the First Monday, (Dec. 1) it was unanimously resolved, by the few members present, that a meeting be called for the 20th instant, and that the members of the Board be earnestly requested to turn out, en masse, and attend that meeting. In pursuance of this action, I hereby notify and urge the Directors of the several Districts in the county to attend with their District organizations complete. I earnestly urge each member of his respective District Board to be present, so that in the transaction of the important business, which has been postponed from time to time on account of the members failing to attend, the Districts may be fully represented. Feeling deeply impressed with the persuasions, thus united action on the part of members of the Board is of vital importance to the ultimate success of our system, I trust I may be pardoned, and that I do not incur your displeasure, when I declare that such seeming neglect of duty on your part will exert a powerful influence to the prejudice of the cause by creating a corresponding indifference on the part of the public, to say nothing of the injury to the cause resulting from the neglected business. Let all private matters be so disposed that this one day may be given exclusively to the purposes for which it is set apart, and be sure to remember that day—Saturday December 20th.

Very respectfully,
N. L. WHITFIELD.

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The Political Revolution.

The following we clip from the Charleston News, and commend it to the consideration of those who have lost hope of defeating the Radical Republican party, without a "new party, and a new deal."

President Grant's popular majority one year was 702,271. Elected by a larger majority than any of his predecessors since Washington's time, supported by decisive majorities in both Houses of Congress, with a Supreme Court in sympathy with him, and with his friends in power in twenty-six of the thirty-seven States, he seemed invincible and was so proclaimed. Twelve months have elapsed since the administration victory. The scandals of the salary grab, the Credit Mobilier Grab and the Federal interference in local affairs were followed by a financial crisis, brought on by the blundering financial policy of the government. The result has been astounding. Not an election has been held in 1873, which has not been a democratic victory, or shown an extraordinary falling off in the Republican vote. The reversal of the Presidential verdict occurred in Connecticut. A Democratic Governor was elected in a State which a few months before gave Grant an overwhelming majority. 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